



connections
creativity
communities

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



A photograph of three people participating in a cultural activity. In the foreground, a woman with glasses and a grey t-shirt is holding a piece of wood with smoke rising from it. Behind her, a man with glasses and a dark shirt is looking on. To the right, a woman wearing a white hat, sunglasses, and a black t-shirt is also looking at the smoke. The background is dark and out of focus.

Arts North West acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the lands we work on; the country upon which language, arts and culture has been shared and practiced for thousands of years. We celebrate First Nations people's enduring Connection to Country, to Culture and Community.

We are proud to live, work and create on the unceded lands of the Ngarabal, Bundjalung, Gumbainggir, Nganyaywana, Dainggatti, Biripi, Banbai, Jukembal and Kamilaroi Nations. We pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past, present, our cultural leaders of today and the inspirational leaders of our future.

WHO WE ARE

Arts North West facilitates the development of arts and cultural projects and initiatives across the New England North West of New South Wales. We have a service area of over 93,000 km² and population of over 183,000 people.

Our Vision is for a rich, diverse cultural landscape.

Our Mission is to expand creative opportunities in our region

As a key service provider in the region, Arts North West drives cultural growth by increasing participation in arts and cultural activities, building community and cultural capacity, and delivering innovative programs. We do this through tailored support, strategic advice, advocacy, professional development opportunities, and by forging strong partnerships and networks across the region.

For over 25 years, Arts North West has remained true to its core purpose of regional arts development while responding with agility to local and global challenges. We are recognised as the peak advisory body for arts in the region, with a strong reputation built on deep community engagement, responsive service delivery, and long-term support for creatives and cultural organisations.

Our work is guided by four Core Objectives:

- **CREATIVITY**— Develop and broaden diverse audiences and their participation in arts and cultural activities.
- **COMMUNITY** — Grow and support community cultural capacity.
- **CONNECTIONS**— Forge strong partnerships and networks across the region.
- **GOVERNANCE** — Ensure a sustainable organisation through sound leadership and accountability.

Arts North West delivers a range of impactful and responsive programs that reflect these objectives and respond to the needs of our region's creative ecology:

- **ANW Museums and Heritage Network** – connecting and supporting regional museums, collections, and heritage professionals.
- **ANW Enable Arts Program** – supporting creatives with disability and promoting inclusive arts practice.
- **ANW SustainABLE Communities Program** – fostering creative responses to environmental, cultural, social, and economic sustainability.
- **First STORIES, Moving forward together** - Arts North West's First Stories Program partners with First Nations individuals and organisations to strengthen opportunities for Aboriginal artists and communities across our region.
- **Arts North West ON TOUR** – showcasing local talent and facilitating regional creative exchange.
- **Arts North West Connect** – public and accessible database for creatives, venues, museums and artists, designed as a regional connector and cultural tourism platform for the region's creatives, councils, and cultural organisations.

Arts North West is committed to leveraging the transformative power of the arts to build connected, creative, and inclusive communities across the New England North West.

“Over the past two years, their help has made a big difference in bringing arts and cultural projects to our community. In our large and somewhat isolated region, it can be hard for the Council to fund or find the resources for many projects. Arts North West has stepped in to make these opportunities possible.”

-Scott Pollock,
Manager of Arts, Culture and Tourism
Narrabri Shire Council



“Their unwavering support for our signature events has been transformative. By aligning their projects with our initiatives, Arts North West has helped elevate our celebrations, making them more impactful and inclusive. Their collaboration and partnership have resulted in innovative solutions and resources, including toolkits that empower local artists and community groups.”

- Rhonda Bombell
Coordinator Economic development & Tourism
Glen Innes Severn Council

OUR SERVICES

Advice and Support - We offer tailored advice and practical support for artists, organisations, communities, arts workers, local government staff and possible collaborators. By addressing challenges and identifying opportunities, we help ensure success in your creative endeavours.

Strategic Support & Policy Development - Arts North West offers expert guidance in strategic planning and policy development tailored to the arts and cultural sector. We assist regional organisations and local government bodies in crafting frameworks that align with best practices, ensuring sustainable growth and effective governance.

Marketing and Promotions - Leverage our expertise in marketing and promotional strategies to amplify the reach and impact of your creative projects and events.

Resource Hub - Access a diverse range of resources designed for museums, community galleries, creatives, arts workers, and anyone organising arts and cultural events.

Professional Development - We deliver professional development workshops for arts workers, creatives, councils, businesses, and arts organisations across the region.

Creative Development - Arts North West supports the conception and development of creative projects, helping artists and organisations transform ideas into impactful cultural initiatives that enhance regional arts.

Project Management - Arts North West specialises in Project Management for cultural events and projects. With extensive experience in delivering successful, high-impact initiatives, we are your trusted partner in bringing creative visions to life.

Grant Support and Advice - Discover a wealth of grants and funding opportunities for regional NSW artists and organisations. We are happy to review your funding applications and provide feedback to maximize your chances of success.

Industry Networking Forums - Our forums connect artists, cultural practitioners, and organisations to collaborate, share insights, and build lasting partnerships across the creative sector.

Public Art Support - We offer tailored support for public art projects, guiding artists and organisations through planning, funding, and implementation.

Advocacy - We champion the arts by advocating for greater support, visibility, and recognition. Arts North West ensures that arts and culture remain central to local and state government policies and community discussions.

Grant Auspicing - We offer grant auspicing services for eligible projects, providing management and guidance to meet governance and financial reporting requirements.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Arts North West is an organisation with a strong, impactful history and, I believe, an equally significant future unfolding. Throughout 2024, the organisation successfully enhanced existing services and programs, supporting artists in our region and facilitating access to creative experiences for many thousands of people. Funding has been distributed directly to artists through CASP and MicroGrant programs, while the Arts North West team also supports artists and organisations in applying for other funding opportunities with advice and professional development. Alongside well-established programs such as Arts North West On Tour, which brings popular music and theatre performances to our region, the organisation strives to be agile in developing new programs that address the needs and aspirations of the richly diverse communities across our broad region of NSW.

In the creative arts, we often express ideas or feelings that cannot be expressed in other ways. The human stories of our region, whether communicated through writing, music, weaving, painting, carving, etc., are of priceless value to us as regional people, but also crucial to the nation. Your voices need to be heard. The great problems of our time (and there are many!) cannot be solved by politicians or scientists without our help; artists have an essential role to play in telling our authentic stories. Creative thinking is a unique kind of analytical process, and a high-level order of thinking that humanity needs now more than ever.

Art, as we know, is not just entertainment. The creative industries are a very significant part of the Australian economy, especially in regional Australia, where artistic production represents not only an essential contribution to local economies but also underpins social interactions and quality of life. On the whole, sadly, we can't pretend that things are going well for regional Australians. In 2019, an Australian Government report observed that:

"On average, Australians living in rural and remote areas have shorter lives, higher levels of disease and injury and poorer access to and use of health services, compared with people living in metropolitan areas. Poorer health outcomes in rural and remote areas may be due to multiple factors, including lifestyle differences and a level of disadvantage related to education and employment opportunities, as well as access to health services."^[1]

[1] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Rural and Remote Health. Canberra: AIHW, 2019.
<<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/population-groups/rural-remote-australians/overview>>.

This serves as a shocking reminder of the extent to which our communities are suffering. The creative arts provide an essential medium for regional people to speak truth to power, and one of Arts North West's many functions is to serve as an amplifier for these messages.

Ultimately, our work is all about people and investing in the diverse people of our region. I take this opportunity to thank the Arts North West team, who work hard to build relationships, deliver projects, and sustain resourcing for the arts in our communities. Lauren Mackley, as Executive Director, provided strong and insightful leadership throughout 2024, and I also thank Miranda Heckenberg, who has taken over as Executive Director during Lauren's maternity leave in 2025, bringing her own valuable energy and expertise to the role. Members of the Arts North West Strategic Advisory Council and the Aboriginal Steering Committee contribute wise counsel and strategic ideas that inform key areas of focus, and I thank them for their generosity in this work. Finally, I thank my colleagues, members of the Board of Directors, who have contributed much time and priceless expertise to our shared purpose, building a vision for the future of the North West region of NSW.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Noble', is positioned to the left of the printed name.

Professor Alistair Noble
Arts North West
Chairperson





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Arts North West is proud of our strong community engagement and has established a robust reputation locally, as the peak advisory body for arts in the region. We know the arts have the power to connect people beyond geographic, social and cultural borders and play a pivotal role in education, health, wellbeing, identity and inclusion in regional areas. Creating partnerships is central to our service provision. We work with other organisations both in and outside the sector, leveraging strategic partnerships to strengthen our creative landscape, and diversifying income for our regional economies. The arts are intrinsic to an engaged, responsive, and resilient society.

As we wrap up another incredible year at Arts North West, we reflect on the creativity, resilience, and community spirit that have defined 2024. This year has been filled with vibrant arts projects, meaningful collaborations, and inspiring stories that have brought people together across our beautiful region. We are proud of the milestones achieved and how we have demonstrated the transformative power of the arts, fostering connections and amplifying diverse voices.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the artists, creatives, cultural leaders, and communities who have worked with us this year. Your passion and commitment are the lifeblood of the arts, and it has been an honour to work alongside you. To our funding partners, local government councils, and supporters, thank you for believing in our vision and enabling us to create lasting impact in the New England North West.

As we look ahead to 2025, I am pleased to hand over the reins to incoming Executive Director Miranda Heckenberg, while I take time to be with my family while on maternity leave.

We are excited to continue building a region rich in cultural vibrancy, resilience, and inclusivity. Together, we will embrace new challenges and opportunities, ensuring the arts remain a cornerstone of community life in the region. From all of us at Arts North West, we wish you a joyous holiday season and a New Year filled with creativity, connection, and inspiration. Thank you for being part of our journey—we can't wait to see what we will achieve together in the year ahead.

Lauren Mackley
Arts North West
Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2024, Arts North West continued to deliver an ambitious and wide-ranging program of work that enriched the cultural life of the New England North West. The organisation remained focused on strengthening creative capacity, centring First Nations voices, activating communities, and supporting artists with practical and strategic resources—through funding programs like CASP and MicroGrants, regional touring, professional development, and place-based engagement.

While I wasn't the Executive Director during 2024, and can't take credit for the year's achievements, I have had the pleasure of working with Arts North West in a variety of roles since 2019. It has been a real privilege to step into the Acting Executive Director role during 2025 while Lauren Mackley is on maternity leave, and to see firsthand the legacy of impact she and the team have built.

I'd especially like to thank the staff, Leah Fontyn, Penne Fraser, Hester Fraser and Robbie Hartigan, who have made this transition smooth and enjoyable. They are not only incredibly capable and efficient, but also passionate about what they do and the communities they serve. Their dedication and professionalism have also been central to everything the organisation accomplished in 2024.

The Chair's report this year offers a powerful reflection on the role of the arts in our region—not only as a driver of cultural and economic activity, but as an essential force in addressing some of the greatest challenges we face. From health inequalities to social disconnection, the arts provide a space for truth-telling, creative problem-solving, and deep human connection. Arts North West, as the Chair so clearly puts it, serves as an amplifier for the voices and stories that must be heard.

As we move into 2025, we do so with a strong foundation, a dedicated team, and a real and genuine commitment to investing in the people and places that define our region.

Miranda Heckenberg
Arts North West
Acting Executive Director

CONTRIBUTING COUNCILS

Arts North West recognises the support of Create NSW and the following local government bodies in the New England North West:

ARMIDALE REGIONAL
GLEN INNES SEVERN
GUNNEDAH SHIRE
GWYDIR SHIRE
LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE
MOREE PLAINS SHIRE
NARRABRI SHIRE
TAMWORTH REGIONAL
TENTERFIELD SHIRE
URALLA SHIRE
WALCHA COUNCIL



ABORIGINAL ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGY



Arts North West engaged **Integr8y** to undertake community consultation across the Arts North West (Arts NW) footprint and develop the Arts North West Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy (2024-2028). This strategy was adopted 10/10/2024.



ABORIGINAL ARTS OFFICER

Robbie Hartigan started in late Feb 2024 in his role as ANW Aboriginal Arts Officer. Robbie is an Aboriginal man within the Gamilaraay/Guyinbaraay community and has a background in Project Management and delivery, digital marketing, community engagement, performance, and logistical applications. He has recently finished his Bachelor of Music Composition and Production at the Australian Institute of Music. He has recently completed an internship at Studio Gilay, Sydney with the esteemed Jake Duczynski and he has been a student at Tamworth and Sydney Conservatorium of Music for Piano, Vocal, and Cello.



ABORIGINAL STEERING COMMITTEE

The NENW Aboriginal Arts Steering Committee supports Arts North West with cultural guidance and decision-making, strategic planning, advice and feedback and will be developing respectful and sustainable relationships based on trust and respect for our cultural values and our histories. The NENW Aboriginal Arts Steering Committee is comprised of two Aboriginal volunteer representatives from each of the contributing LGAs in our region.

FIRST STORIES COMMITTEE

Brent Emerson (Inverell),
Vicky Duncan (Inverell),
Nate Weatherall (Armidale),
Kaliela Thornton (Tamworth),
Tyler Stackman-Green (Walcha),
Leanne Pryor (Gunnedah),
Tammy Wortley (Gunnedah),
Raquel Clarke (Moree),
Mona Fernando (Moree),
Amy Allerton (Tamworth),
Lyniece Keogh (Tamworth),
Ethan Towns (Narrabri),
Waabii Adele Chapman-Burgess (Glen Innes),
Liza Duncan (Inverell),
Rose Lovelock (Armidale)



OBJECTIVE 1: CREATIVITY

*Develop and broaden our diverse
audiences and their participation in
arts and cultural activities*



PROJECTS

'LETTER TO MY RETURNING'

'Letter to My Returning...' was a creative recovery response project aiming to work with communities that were affected by the flood events of 2021/2022. Arts North West engaged local artists from those communities to create artworks and creative documentation that reflect on the flood events that have affected the region. Through the power of letter writing, community members were also invited to address a letter directly to the flood waters as part of a community engagement activity. Artists created a body of work that responded to the letters and/or their own personal experiences. The letters and artworks were curated as part of a touring exhibition at Bank Art Museum Moree, Gunnedah Bicentennial Creative Arts Gallery and the Wee Waa Community and Arts Centre. This creative recovery response project created space to build relationships that reduced feelings of isolation, an outlet for emotional release, increased community cohesiveness, and a sense of shared optimism reflection and commemoration.



REFLECTIONS

Arts North West created the 'Reflections' project to explore our regional identities and digitally translate art practices from throughout the New England North West to a larger audience, while providing mentoring and skills development opportunities. Arts North West worked with two digital artists, Suzie Wicks and Mike Terry to mentor two emerging artists Ijumaa Stephenson and Shae Duncan. Together they recorded cultural and creative workshops with The Euraba Papermakers, Tania Hartigan's natural fibres papermaking and flora still life as well as silk screen printing with Suzie Spencer. Collectively mentors, mentees, facilitators and participants created a community exhibition and associated performances, that acknowledged and explored the journey of natural fibres through the numerous creative disciplines in our regional setting.



THE COOLABAH PROJECT

Arts North West secured funding through the Office of Youth's, Youth Opportunities fund to work with young people in the region to develop Cultural Tourism businesses and offerings. 'The Coolabah' Project works to empower young cultural leaders to develop youth focused and participant led cultural tours within the Gomerioi Nation. The Project focuses on revitalising and promoting culture and creating opportunities for youth empowerment and employment. This two year project has been working with Gomerioi youth from Tamworth, Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah local government areas.

'FELTING HANDS ON THE NAMOI' IN BAAN BAA AND GWABEGAR

Arts North West extended its *Felting Hands* project from Moree to deliver creative flood recovery workshops in the Baan Baa and Gwabegar community halls. ANW once again partnered with artist Joanne Barr and the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) to facilitate the sessions. These workshops offered participants a chance to reconnect with their community, check in on their mental health, and learn a variety of wet felting techniques. RAMHP Coordinator Letitia Cross attended each session to provide informal support and share information and resources related to health and wellbeing.

By the end of the one-day workshops, participants left with a handmade felt hat, new friendships, and renewed connections within their communities. This project was made possible through funding from the Boosting Rural Resilience Program, PHN, and Create NSW.



TAMWORTH REGIONAL GALLERY: AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT William Kentridge - I AM NOT ME, THE HORSE IS NOT MINE

Nicholas Chambers Senior Curator, Modern and Contemporary International Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW).
1.30-2.30 Friday 5 September 2024

RIVER COUNTRY

The National Museum of Australia developed a community arts project to celebrate the waterways of the Murray Darling River system. Arts North West worked with fourteen artists from the New England North West to reflect on the thriving and interconnected world of unique flora and fauna, deeply entwined with the well-being of local the population and the river systems of the Gwydir and Namoi Rivers. These rivers have been identified as one of the eight critical ecological communities in Australia. The artworks became part of a larger work in the Main Hall of the National Museum of Australia as part of the River Community Day. The River Country Community Day closed with the premiere screening of the documentary "More Than A Fish Kill," followed by a panel discussion hosted by ABC RN's Natasha Mitchell.



TABULAM - TRAIL OF LIGHT AND SOUND - CREATIVE RESIDENCY (TABULUM HALL)

On the 25th May, Arts North West partnered with RealArtWorks to deliver the Tabulam: Trail of Light and Sound with over 40 artists from the area including community members, emerging and established artists. The event was officially opened by the powerful stories of Jabulam by Poppy Harry followed by Janelle Saffin MP. There were over 400 people in attendance who enjoyed the projections, poetry, live music, performance art, paintings and puppetry as they moved through the streets of Tabulam exploring the creative responses to the theme of 'Home'.

This was such an incredible experience for everyone involved! This project was made possible through the partnerships of RealArtWork Inc, Arts North West, Arts Northern Rivers and Kyogle Shire.



GUNNEDAH HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT ARTIST EOI AND EXHIBITION DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, Arts North West partnered with Hunter New England Health to deliver two significant public art opportunities as part of the Gunnedah Hospital Redevelopment.

Emergency Department Entry Canopy: this commission was open to Aboriginal artists with cultural ties to the Gomeroi, Kamilaroi, or Gamilaroi people. The selected artist was invited to create a major design for the hospital's Emergency Department entry canopy, offering a culturally rich and visually impactful welcome for all who enter the facility.

Wall Graphics for Emergency & Maternity Units: This opportunity called for artists from the broader Hunter New England region with deep community links to Gunnedah. The selected artist/s contributed original digital artworks to be reproduced as large-scale wall graphics throughout the Emergency and Maternity Units.



TAMWORTH MENTAL HEALTH UNIT UPGRADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HUNTER NEW ENGLAND HEALTH

Arts North West helped to facilitate an open call for artists across the Hunter New England region with a connection to the Peel, Mehi, or Tablelands areas to submit artworks for inclusion in the new Tamworth Mental Health Unit. Artists were invited to submit either physical artworks or high-resolution digital files suitable for wall graphics. The artworks aimed to support the wellbeing of patients, visitors, and staff, enriching the hospital environment through thoughtful and therapeutic visual experiences.





CBD ACTIVATION AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

A number of CBD activation projects funded by Create NSW's Restart and Recovery Fund continued across 2024. Public spaces in regional communities were transformed into public galleries across the New England North West.

The **'Roaming Murals'** returned to our streets for NarraBRITE (Narrabri), Renewable Manilla (Tamworth) and The Big Chill Festival (Armidale).

'Yarn Bombing' workshops and installations also returned to Tamworth, Manilla, Moree, Narrabri and Armidale.

Understanding our Audiences: Event Evaluation and Data Collection at Minerama Glen Innes, Create Narrabri, Celtic Festival Glen Innes, The Big Chill Festival Armidale, Bingara Orange Festival, Wee Waa Show, Imagine Tamworth, New England Garden Festival, and Christmas in the Highlands Glen Innes.

Children's Craft Activities: Creative badge making at New Residents Information Event at Tamworth Regional Gallery and PRIDE Festival Tamworth Anzac Park. Clay Makers Workshop at Imagine Tamworth.

Pop up stall for Creatives at **Tamworth Country Music Festival** and kid's activities at the Fringe Tent.

NIGHT TIME ACTIVATION

- **Tabulam - Trail of Light and Sound**
- **Tamworth Outdoor Gallery (Projections) Expression of Interest**
- **Armidale Light Festival: James O'Hanlon and Christine Spedding**

ARTS NORTH WEST ON TOUR



Arts North West ON TOUR (ANWOT) is a regional touring service bespoke to Arts North West. Providing nationally acclaimed locally produced live theatre offerings to small-to-medium performing arts venues in the New England North West. ANWOT promotes, supports and negotiates touring productions for venues throughout the region, while also providing touring advice, marketing collateral and resources. In 2023 Arts North West changed from a subscription based model to a fee-for-service model to respond to opportunities for smaller venues, community organisations, galleries, museums and local venues to be part of the tour coordination. This model provides agility 'post-covid' and also ensures theatre can continue to viably tour regional NSW.

MUSIC NSW



Arts North West continued its partnership with Music NSW to deliver the Regional Partnership program to assist musicians, venues and touring personnel in regional NSW. Music NSW and ANW delivered a series of 1-on-1 sessions and networking events in Moree and Gunnedah in 2024. Offering advice and creating pathways between local industry, local government and artists, and providing on-the-ground support for regional musicians, venues and live music professionals. Music NSW grows regional touring as well as supports with project management, planning, budget, insurance, promotion and marketing, funding sources and opportunities in relation to individual or organisational arts and cultural practice. MusicNSW and Arts North West also supported the Armidale Black Gully Music Festival, promoting the NENW leg of MusicNSW's 'Winding North Tour' with regional artists Bella Frankie, Kirsty Larkin, and Ollie Twohill.

***Check out the North West Sounds Spotify playlist
produced by Music NSW.***

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**ARTS NORTH WEST ON TOUR SHOWS
DELIVERED TO REGIONAL AUDIENCES IN 2024**



LIFE DRAWING WITH A COMEDIAN

- 28 February to 28 March 2024

Locations included: Pallamallawa, Mungindi, Garah, Moree, Coonamble, Warren, Nyngan, Cobar, Bourke, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Uralla, Gunnedah, Armidale, Coonabarabran, Tamworth, Wee Waa, Baan Baa, Merriwa, Muswellbrook and Dungog.

This ANWOT Pocket Production, created by Laugh Mob, invited audiences to get creative and embrace the humour of life drawing. With plenty of laughs, audience participation, and unexpected surprises, this tour was a hit with locals across the region.



THE KITCHEN WITCHES

- **Saturday 23 March 2024 – Gunnedah Civic Theatre**

This hilarious comedy, presented by Arts North West On Tour and Tamworth Dramatic Society, was a culinary showdown of legendary proportions. Featuring two 'mature' TV cooking show hostesses, Isobel Lomax and Dolly Biddle, who have despised each other for 30 years, the show spiralled into chaos and laughter. Directed by Jenny Sullivan, The Kitchen Witches became a smash hit with its witty insults, food-flinging antics, and the outrageous behind-the-scenes drama of live TV.



MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL COMEDY FESTIVAL

- **Wednesday 26 June - Glen Innes Chapel Theatre**
- **Tuesday 2 July - Inverell RSM Club**
- **Wednesday 3 July - Moree Town Hall**
- **Thursday 4 July - Gunnedah Civic Theatre**
- **Friday 5 July - Tamworth Capitol Theatre**

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival returned to regional NSW. Featuring a selection of top-tier comedians, this tour offered audiences the best of Australia's comedy scene, packed with jokes and surprises.



WHALEBONE - JENS ALTHEIMER

- **Wednesday 19 March 6pm & Thursday 20 March 10:30 & 12:30- Capitol Theatre, Tamworth**

WHALEBONE is visually delightful; the recycled contraptions, inventions, cleverly used technology and magic combined with juggling and clowning are totally mesmerising and engaging. Yet through all of this wizardry and physical theatre there is a show with real heart that shares an important message without any didacticism. This is undeniably a show for all ages, with much to connect adults and children. It is a show to make you smile and laugh, to be surprised and delighted



THE FLOWER & THE FIDDLE: GOLDHEIST & ANDREW CLERMONT

- **Friday 16 August, 6:00pm - The Australian Poetry Hall of Fame, Guyra**
- **Sunday 18 August, 1:00pm - School of Arts Hall, Deepwater**
- **Sunday 25 August, 3:00pm - NERAM, Armidale**

The Flower & The Fiddle featured the musical talents of multi-instrumentalist Andrew Clermont and singer-songwriter GOLDHEIST. The duo presented an enchanting performance filled with folk, classical, and Celtic influences, bringing to life a tapestry of evocative stories and characters.



THE FISH THAT WANTED TO FLY

- **Friday 2 August** - Newling Public School, Tamworth
- **Monday 5 August** - Coonabarabran Town Hall
- **Tuesday 6 August** - Boggabri Public School
- **Wednesday 7 August** - Gunnedah Civic Theatre
- **Thursday 8 August** - Bingara Roxy Theatre
- **Friday 9 August** - Wallabadah Memorial Hall

Did you ever dream of doing something impossible? The Fish That Wanted to Fly, presented by Little Wing Puppets, took audiences on a magical journey of courage, resilience, and friendship.



TINDERELLA & THE EIGHT UNIQUE USES OF TINDER

- **Thursday 1 August, 7:30pm** - The Press Basement Bar, Tamworth
- **Friday 2 August, 7:30pm** - The Playhouse Theatre, Armidale

Tailored for an 18+ audience, TINDERELLA was designed to make people laugh, overshare, and leave with a wholesome message about taking control of their own dating experiences. Grounded in regional Australian storytelling, this production was the perfect night out for anyone looking for a light-hearted, joy-filled show that would have them sore from laughter.



STRINGS & STEEL: MULTI-INSTRUMENTALISTS

ANDREW CLERMONT & GARRY STEEL

- **Friday 30 August, 6:30pm** - Artshack Wilgabah, Wallabadah
- **Saturday 31 August, 7:00pm** - McCrossin's Mill, Uralla
- **Sunday 1 September, 2:00pm** - Curlewis Hall, Curlewis

Strings & Steel featured the musical brilliance of Andrew Clermont and Garry Steel, showcasing their talents as multi-instrumentalists. With over 50 years of experience, the duo took audiences on a sonic journey, performing a mix of world music styles.



MZA: THE BIRTH & DEATH OF STARS

- **Friday 20 September, 7:30pm** - Capitol Theatre, Tamworth

MZA, Australia's celebrated world music group, presented The Birth & Death of Stars, a theatrical musical experience like no other. Inspired by history's greatest philosophers and astronomers, this production combined stunning vocals in three languages, live music, and collage animation, taking the audience on a surreal and inspirational journey into the ether. It was an unforgettable exploration of the cosmos through the lens of world music



IN THE ZONE

- **Tuesday 24 September** - Gunnedah Civic Theatre

In the Zone, a groundbreaking work by Shaun Parker & Company, brought together hip-hop dance and gaming technology. Featuring Western Sydney hip-hop artist Libby Montilla and award-winning choreographer Shaun Parker, the performance incorporated innovative AirSticks technology, creating live sound through movement. Aimed at promoting emotional resilience in young people, this immersive show engaged young audiences, particularly gamers, and encouraged them to recognise their control over emotional responses.

OBJECTIVE 2: COMMUNITY

Grow and support community cultural capacity



ADVICE & ADVOCACY

Creative industries significantly contribute to Australia's economy—adding over \$111 billion or 6.4% to GDP in 2016–17—and are key drivers of job creation, tourism, innovation, and cultural engagement. These impacts are particularly critical in regional areas seeking diversification and long-term resilience.

In 2024, ANW continued to act as a conduit between the NSW Government, local governments, and the creative sector to support the implementation of the Vibrancy Reforms. These reforms aim to improve planning, liquor, outdoor, and sound/noise regulations to encourage more cultural activity across NSW. Tamworth, identified as a trial site for Live Music Precincts, has been a focal point for ANW's advocacy. We've also supported councils to reduce red tape for festivals and events and have guided creatives, event organisers, and production staff in navigating these evolving regulations.

Arts North West (ANW) is uniquely positioned to advocate for the creative industries as a vital pillar of economic and social strength in the New England North West (NENW) region. Our deep community integration, regional expertise, and strategic focus on sector growth allow us to champion the value of creativity at all levels.

The identity of the NENW is shifting. The region faces ongoing environmental pressures, such as natural disasters and extreme climate conditions, while remaining a national leader in agriculture, mining, and increasingly, renewable energy. These changes have brought a rise in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and transient populations, as well as challenges in retaining young people and families. With over 20.7% of our population aged 65 or older, this demographic trend is set to continue.

These changes reinforce the importance of Arts North West as an advocate and the lead arts and cultural development organisation for the region. Working in partnership with local governments, cultural institutions, and creatives, ANW plays a critical role in strengthening the liveability of the region. We remain agile and responsive, curating programs that reflect the distinct identities and evolving needs of each community.

In a time of social, economic, and environmental flux, the role of the arts cannot be overstated. ANW positions culture as a driver of tourism, a tool for social cohesion, and a key component of a healthy, liveable society.

Through our NENW Sustainable Communities Program, ANW is collecting localised data—such as visitor spending, postcodes, and overnight stays—in partnership with councils, galleries, museums, performing arts venues, and major events. This data will inform an annual report tailored for local and regional government, providing insights into cultural participation and helping shape strategic, targeted storytelling and development.

By producing evidence-based research, ANW empowers stakeholders to understand and articulate the social and economic impacts of the arts. These insights drive cultural investment, inform programming, and contribute to regional growth. We also demonstrate how arts and culture support economic diversification and strengthen community resilience.

By leveraging strong partnerships across the region, ANW continues to amplify the transformative power of the arts—fostering creative skills for future workforces, boosting tourism, and celebrating the unique stories of the New England North West.

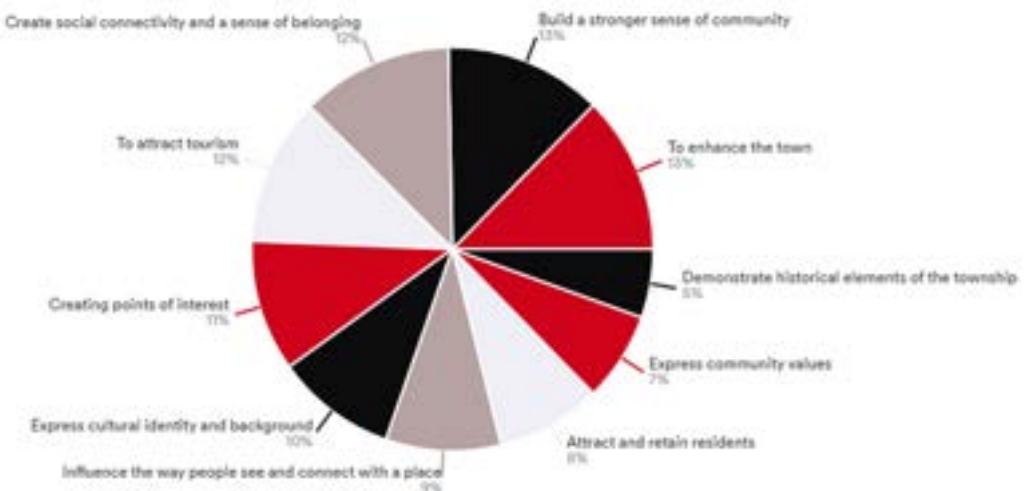
UNDERSTANDING OUR AUDIENCES

EVENT EVALUATION & DATA COLLECTION



Arts North West collects and collates valuable data at the event and provides a detailed case study, complete with insightful and easy-to-interpret graphs. This comprehensive analysis serves as a roadmap for organisers, highlighting event successes and areas for improvement. Equipped with this bespoke service, event holders can make informed decisions, optimising future events, and shape stronger connections within their communities.

Why respondents want to see more events like this in the New England North West



ANW FUNDED COMMUNITY PROJECTS



The Country Arts Support Program (CASP) is an annual small grants program funded by Create NSW and managed by Regional Arts Development Organisations. Arts North West administered grants under the Country Arts Support Program of up to \$3,000 for individuals, arts community groups and arts organisations in the New England North West to support their creative endeavour. In 2024 eight organisations from across the New England North West region successfully secured a CASP grant. \$17,000 worth of grant funds have been allocated throughout the region.

Tamworth Regional Craft Centre (TRCC) - Shannon Garson Workshop

Project: Workshop by Shannon Garson, a renowned Australian ceramic artist.

Details: Focus on porcelain decoration techniques inspired by the natural world. Participants will enhance their skills and creative vision in ceramics.

Michèle Jedlicka - Not Born Yesterday - Theme Song

Project: Creation of a theme song by Narrabri Shire singer/songwriter Sarah Leete for the independent film "Not Born Yesterday".

Details: The film captures the voices and stories of women over 60 in New England/North West NSW, reflecting the female director's views on aging.

Cat Long - After School Art/Craft Classes

Project: After school art classes for rural primary-aged students.

Details: Classes at the PCYC in Gunnedah every Monday during term time, exploring imagination, sustainable art practices, and emotional well-being.

Deepwater Progress Association Inc - Mosaic Workshops

Project: Two one-day mosaic workshops.

Details: Participants will create a 30x30 trivet and a free-choice mosaic artwork using recycled materials. To be held at "Gallery 4779" in Deepwater for 12 participants per workshop.

Fiona Barden (D & FE Barden T/A Wood We Create) - Art Experiences in Walcha

Project: Quarterly Sunday trading days and regular day tours for art experiences.

Details: Includes boutique shopping, gallery openings, and art/craft lessons, along with workshops with artists in Walcha.

Alana Blackburn - Development of Project

Project: Development of a new musical work based on local narratives.

Details: Develop a series of local narratives, engaging local authors to work towards engaging local composers to create and present this piece around the New England North West region.

Uralla Arts Council Inc - Picnic in the Park

Project: Development of a new park dedicated to the mathematician Fibonacci.

Details: Designing and building a picnic table and seating based on geometric principles of the Fibonacci sequence.

New England Writers Centre, Sophie Masson - Pitch to the Publisher

Twin projects: Pitch to the Publisher; and AAWP conference participation to showcase New England creators.

Details: August - Pitch to the Publisher online sessions with publisher Riveted Press; exclusively for New England writers and illustrators. Fantastic opportunity to directly pitch work.



The first round of Arts North West Micro Grants were announced in 2020 as direct response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Due to their popularity, Micro Grants have continued to be a regular fixture in Arts North West programming ever since. Eighteen creative endeavours were successfully funded through the fifth round of the Arts North West Micro Grants program. \$17,000 worth of grant funds were allocated throughout the New England North West.

Lorrelle Munro, Tamworth LGA

Creating woven artworks rooted in Gomeri weaving traditions using locally-sourced Lomandra grasses at Warrabah National Park, inspiring future works to be displayed in Tamworth.

The Florin Arc, Uralla LGA

Recording a 10-track music album at Golden Retriever Studios in Sydney, blending instrumentation and studio expertise to craft a polished final piece.

Shingal Music, Armidale LGA

Bringing Kurdish (Ezidi) folk music to wider audiences, this project by Ezidi refugee musicians will preserve cultural heritage and foster community connection.

Mary McMillan, Armidale LGA

Expanding textile techniques at the 'Landscape Fragments' workshop by award-winning artist Julia Wright, enhancing her practice of nature-inspired textile art.

Janna Hayes, Armidale LGA

Acquiring a 60x64" tapestry loom to produce large-scale, hand-dyed wool works, exploring human creativity through an intricate fusion of organic and methodical design.

Amy Schultz, Liverpool Plains LGA

Recording original music and engaging in professional development for educational music performances, benefiting students at Willow Tree Public School.

Taleiah Conlan, Gunnedah LGA

Establishing a digital presence and acquiring art supplies to support larger commissions, aiding her growth as a Gomeri artist.

Armidale Piper, Armidale LGA

Launching a digital shopfront for the business, enabling broader reach and integration across social platforms for marketing and sales.

James Warren: Australian Poetry Hall of Fame, Armidale LGA

Hosting the Poets on the Mountain Festival with workshops and school outreach to develop and celebrate poetic voices within the community.

Solasta Performing Arts, Narrabri LGA

Supporting an end-of-year performance at the Crossing Theatre, creating a high-quality showcase for students at no charge to the community.

Wood We Create, Walcha LGA

Launching the exhibition Created from Ash, showcasing local Claret Ash trees' journey from tree to art, complemented by a videography project documenting the transformation.

Arts Gunnedah, Gunnedah LGA

Covering venue and display costs for gallery workshops, enriching the Gunnedah community's engagement with art.

Isabelle Devos, Armidale LGA

Exploring the Liverpool Plains for her exhibition at Weswal Gallery, blending landscape painting with local history and community storytelling.

Lisa Marple, Narrabri LGA

Developing techniques for her #bullawacreeklove exhibition, combining painting, weaving, and cyanotype printing inspired by natural elements.

Awan Eveleigh (Mosaics by Awan), Narrabri LGA

Conducting a mosaic workshop for youth at the Wee Waa Community Arts and Cultural Centre, fostering artistic skill and community involvement.

Mona Fernando, Moree LGA

Delivering weaving and painting workshops in regional schools, sharing artistic skills & enhancing local cultural experiences.

Jane Stewart (Stellar Music School), Tamworth LGA

Supporting choir direction and rehearsals for Christmas events, ensuring a high-quality performance and music purchases for the choir's repertoire.

Fiona McDonald, Armidale LGA

Developing interactive puppet automatons using gears and motion sensors to create engaging, responsive artworks that bring characters to life.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



GRANT WRITING FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT, COMMUNITY AND CREATIVES-

Presented by Lauren Mackley, this practical workshop in Moree supported not-for-profits, community groups, and creatives in developing strong, fundable project ideas. It covered project development, identifying the right grants, understanding tiers of funding, working with guidelines, preparing budgets and support material, and planning for evaluation.

Participants gained valuable tools and insights to help them write compelling and competitive grant applications.

NAVA WORKSHOPS ONLINE:

- **UNDERSTANDING GOOD PRACTICE AROUND ARTISTS' COPYRIGHT AND IP**
- **ETHICAL PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS**
- **EXPLORING NAVA'S PAYMENT STANDARDS**

Arts North West and the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) collaborated to deliver three online workshops, covering various topics about the NAVA Code of Practice.

NAVA's Code sets out equitable, ethical and self-reflective standards for the Australian contemporary arts sector. The Code has been endorsed by the Australian Government as part of the National Cultural Policy.



WORK OF ART - WOMEN IN BUSINESS WITH REGIONAL ARTS NSW

Work of Art was a project by Regional Arts NSW (RANSW), funded by Women NSW. Around 70 regional women participated in a program of work to help develop skills, strategies, confidence and connection to help grow their creative enterprise, with support from Creative + Business. Participants from ANW Region: Hollie Crawford (Gunnedah), Lizzie Horne (Armidale), Michele Jedicka (Dulungra), Penne Fraser (Tamworth).

VISUAL STORYTELLING AND PERSONAL BRAND WORKSHOP

This free, fully subsidised 3-hour workshop with Sewa Emojong helped participants unlock their potential and stand out in today's competitive job market. Delivered in partnership with the Local Jobs Program, Arts North West, and UNE SRI, the session equipped attendees with:

- Essential digital media skills applicable in any workplace
- Awareness of their digital footprint and strategies to craft a personal brand that supports future employment opportunities
- Hands-on experience creating strategic video content for social media

Participants received a certificate of completion to add to their resume.



'REGIONAL MUSIC MATTERS' WITH ATHOL MUNRO

A Celebration of Local Music and Industry Growth.

From 17th to 19th July 2024, Regional Music Matters brought energy and opportunity to the New England North West's music scene during an unforgettable 3-day program at the UNE SMART Region Incubator in Tamworth. Hosted by Sound and Soul Music and led by CEO Athol Munro, this event empowered local musicians to grow their careers and strengthen the region's vibrant music community.



GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP WITH ANW (GLEN INNES, TENTERFIELD, LIVERPOOL PLAINS)

Arts North West delivered a series of Grant Writing Workshops to support artists, non-profits, and cultural organisations in securing project funding. Led by Executive Director Lauren Mackley, the sessions provided practical strategies for crafting strong, competitive grant proposals.

Participants learned how to identify suitable funding opportunities, write compelling project narratives, and develop clear, accurate budgets. The workshops offered insight into the language and structure preferred by arts funders, helping attendees confidently prepare and submit grant applications.



MARKETING & BRANDING WITH ANW (GLEN INNES, TENTERFIELD)

This workshop, delivered by Penne Fraser, ANW Media & Engagement Officer, supported creatives, non-profits, and community groups to refine their marketing strategies and connect with audiences more effectively.

Participants learned how to define their brand identity, create engaging and authentic content, and use AI and analytics to amplify their reach.

Key topics included:

- Strengthening brand identity
- Choosing the right platforms
- Ethical AI in marketing
- Building audience loyalty through content



'CREATIVE + BUSINESS WORKSHOPS WHAT'S IT WORTH? COSTING & PRICING FOR CREATIVES

Working out what to charge for creative products and services can be a colossal challenge. Where to even start? Pricing For Creatives is a practical workshop that covers the basics of figuring out the price point for creative work, including calculating costs and understanding the marketplace and what to charge for creative products and services.

FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR CREATIVES

Making a living and building a business means understanding how money works, but the financial situation for creatives can be tricky. Navigating the numbers is not always a happy place, emotions can be overpowering, and who ever learned the basics of business money and financial literacy during their arts training? Financial Literacy for Creatives is a surprisingly fun and practical workshop designed specifically by creatives, for creatives, with a range of tips and insights into navigating the realities of financial management in a professional arts practice.



FIRST NATIONS PD



NATIONAL INDIGENOUS ARTS FAIR

**Saturday 29 - Sunday 30 June 2024
Overseas Passenger Terminal, The Rocks**

Since 2023, ANW has taken 4 artists every year to NIAF. Each year, the artists that were mentees become mentors for the following year to support the new mentees. This ensures that the knowledge gained from each experience is handed down to the next participants.

Mentors and mentees have all expenses paid including travel, accommodation, and meals with all income from sales at the Arts Fair returning to the artists.

In 2024 Waabii Chapman-Burgess and Tania Hartigan mentored Kate Briggs and Amy Allerton.

GATHER AND TRADE MARKETS

These roaming First Nations Aboriginal Artisans Micro Markets showcase Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Offerings. In 2024 ANW delivered two 'Gather and Trade' Market events; at the NarraBrite Festival in Narrabri in March and at the Myall Creek Memorial at the Ceramic Break Sculpture Park in June.

These were both great opportunities for local Aboriginal creatives to sell their art and products, reaching a wider audience to promote their goods and practices. Funded by the Australian Government IVAIS Program.

ANW also contributed to the Myall Creek Memorial Exhibition and the NAIDOC week Markets in Tamworth and Armidale in July.



UNIQUE IDENTITIES

'Unique identities' was a first nations project with the Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance. This statewide professional development initiative built the capacity of Aboriginal artists and arts workers in regional NSW, encouraging exploration of cultural identity.

The project respected Aboriginal self-determination, particularly in decisions around preserving and sharing cultural knowledge. Focusing on artistry and connection to Country, it fostered collaboration, networking, and a deeper understanding of self within arts practice.



THE SOUTHEAST ABORIGINAL ARTS MARKET

Curated by Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Jonathan Jones, at Carriageworks showcasing the creative diversity of south-east Australian Aboriginal art. Arts North West was able to take Sophie Honess who was able to sell over \$9,000 worth of her art which was viewed by thousands of people over the weekend.



'CULTURE TO COUTURE' DARWIN

Buluuy Mirrii's Miyaamyiay (Seven Sisters) collection by Colleen Tighe Johnson featured in the Boundless show at Country to Couture on August 6 at the Darwin Convention Centre.



NGAAR WIRIBIIYAN EXHIBITION

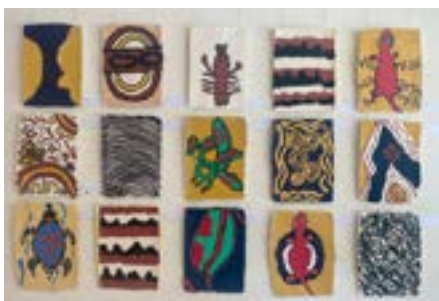
The Ngaar Wirribiiyan program comprises strong young women from Tamworth secondary schools, many with artistic skill. The program is a holistic supportive service designed to assist First Nations young women from Years 7 to 12 to navigate life and education whilst staying connected to their culture. This is achieved through weekly mentoring sessions since the start of Term 4, inspiring and sharing with the young women through art.

GRANT WRITING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

In partnership with the Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance, Arts North West organised professional development workshops at the University of New England's SRIs in Tamworth and Armidale Hosted by Pene Riggs, the workshop focused on teaching participants the core principles of project planning and grant writing



EURABA PAPER MAKING WORKSHOP & EXHIBITION LOOKING BACK / LOOKING FORWARD



The exhibition was held at Yaama Ganu Gallery & Café Gali in partnership with the Bank Art Museum Moree (BAMM). Featuring 50 works on sustainably made cotton pulp paper, it celebrated the resilience, creativity, and cultural pride of the Gomerioi people. The exhibition marked the reopening of the Euraba studio by the Toomelah and Boggabilla communities. Supported by Arts North West through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program (IVAIS), the exhibition highlighted cultural revival, collaboration, and sustainable art practices.



NENW MUSEUMS & HERITAGE NETWORK



THE FUTURE OF REGIONAL HERITAGE

On March 2024, Heritage New England North West held its second annual conference at NOVA in Armidale, supported by Arts North West and the UNE Smart Region Incubator. With the theme The Future of Regional Heritage, the event brought together heritage professionals, community advocates, and academics to explore innovation, success stories, and challenges in preserving regional history.

Keynote speaker **Julie McCarthy**, Archives and Collections Advisor at UNE, presented *Future Proofing the Past: Connecting and Protecting Regional Collections*. Other speakers included: **Marie Hobson**, President of the Gunnedah Historical Society, recognised for her leadership in community heritage projects. **Professor Martin Gibbs** (UNE), who spoke on convict industry and archaeology in Landscapes of Production and Punishment. **Dr Bronwyn Hopwood** (UNE), who shared insights from her work in Roman history and museum curation. **Jody Ekert**, librarian and advocate, who highlighted the often-overlooked LGBTQIA+ histories of the region. **James Arthur Warren** (Thundercloud Repairian), founder of the Australian Poetry Hall of Fame, spoke on preserving poetic heritage. **Rob Taber**, President of the New England Antique Machinery Club, presented on heritage and sustainable technology. **Wayne Hoppe**, Treasurer of Heritage NENW, explored family and property research methods using tools like Trove. **Lauren Mackley** also presented on applying for grants.



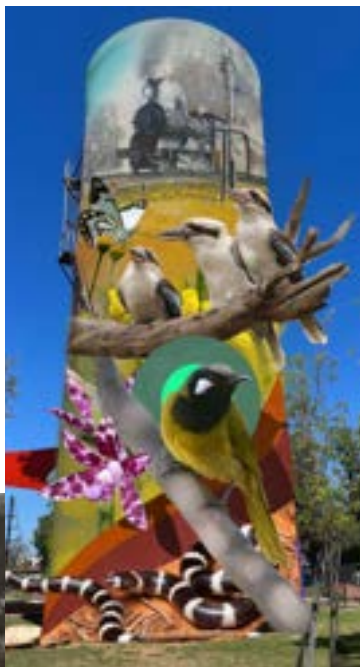
DIGITAL TREASURE: DIGITISATION AND STORYTELLING FOR SMALL MUSEUMS

- McCrossin's Mill, Uralla
- Folk Museum, Armidale
- Dhiyaan Aboriginal Centre, Moree
- Land Of The Beardies History House Museum, Glen Innes
- Roxy Theatre, Bingara
- District Historical Society and Museum, Bingara

Over two days, participants learned how to digitise a chosen museum object from their collection using scanning or photographic methods and prepared a short-form object story (200–250 words) about their selected item. By the end of the workshops, volunteers had developed digitisation knowledge and skills, digitised an object according to museum sector standards (as outlined in the M&G NSW *Crystal Clear* guidelines), and scoped or drafted an object story to accompany their digitised item, suitable for publication on Museums and Galleries of NSW's Storyplace website.

PUBLIC ART CONSULTATION

Public art has been a large contributor to economic development in regional NSW over the last 10 years and is showing no signs of slowing down. Public artwork has transformed physical landscape as well as the audiences of art, removing barriers and perceived perception of elitism while promoting accessible creative and cultural consumption. ANW has been working with local councils to deliver public art initiatives and has integrated this service into our core services.



**Narrabri West
Railway Water
Tower Project in
partnership with
the Narrabri
West Railway
Committee -
preliminary
concept drawing**



Photo courtesy of Haley Robinson

NEST - New England North West Sculpture Track in Bendemeer.

Arts North West provide strategic support, advice and advocacy through numerous State and Local Government committees including the Tamworth Public Arts Advisory Group, Walcha Public Arts Advisory Group, Narrabri Shire Council Public Art Committee and Glen Innes Public Art Committee.

**'Walcha Wayfinding Project' with Walcha
Council to install artist citations
throughout the Walcha Open Air Gallery**



ENABLE ARTS

In 2024, the Arts North West Board ratified the Terms of Reference for an Arts North West Enable Arts Committee to be established. Providing strategic guidance and decision-making, advice, and feedback to the organisation as well as direction and planning for potential programs and projects within the arts and disability programming (Enable Arts) and also the operations of the organisation as a whole.



ARTS NORTH WEST CONNECT



Arts North West Connect is an Arts North West initiative launched in 2012. An online registry promoting creatives, cultural venues, and artswriters in the New England North West region of New South Wales.

As of 2024, Arts North West Connect hosts over 300 profiles of local creatives, cultural venues, and artswriters.



OBJECTIVE 3: CONNECTIONS

Forge strong partnerships and networks across the region.



MEDIA & ENGAGEMENT



2024 communications at a glance

Over 2100 newsletter subscribers

→ **31.44%**

5.5k followers on social media

→ **16.3%**

587 events promoted on the calendar

→ **48.23%**

Over 1200 posts to social media

→ **20%**

23 Newsletters

→ **4.55%**

300 ANW connect profiles

→ **20%**

Social media reach in 2024

→ **139.1% Instagram**

→ **63.4% Facebook**

In 2024, Arts North West proudly continued to grow its role as a trusted communicator and connector in the New England North West. Through consistent storytelling, vibrant digital platforms, and meaningful stakeholder engagement, we've strengthened the region's arts identity while championing the voices of our creative communities.

At the heart of our media efforts is Arts North West Connect, our community-built online creative directory and interactive arts trail. Now with more than 300 active profiles, it continues to be a vital showcase for the artists, venues, and cultural organisations that make our region unique. This platform plays a key role in boosting cultural tourism and local visibility.

Our website remains the central hub for all things arts and culture in the region. With a user-friendly Events Calendar, regularly updated grant and development opportunities, and dedicated news and resources, it empowers communities and creatives to stay connected and informed.

This year, our digital and media footprint grew significantly:

- 5,520 followers across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn
- Over 1,200 posts published
- 20% increase in total social media reach
- 2,100+ newsletter subscribers

These achievements reflect our commitment to creating engaging, timely, and regionally relevant content, and to amplifying the creative stories from across our region.

Looking ahead, 2025 promises further digital evolution, including a new ANW website and our integration into the Salesforce CRM system through the Regional Arts NSW network. These enhancements will support deeper community engagement, better data insights, and more responsive communication.

2024 has been a year of connection, creativity, and momentum. As we continue to build visibility for the arts in our region, we remain committed to sharing the stories that shape us and creating platforms that support our artists, audiences, and partners.

REGIONAL ARTS NETWORK

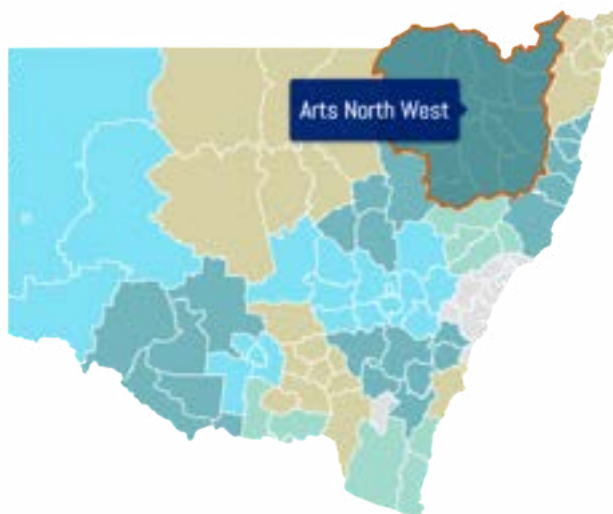
Regional Arts NSW has been the overarching body for Regional Arts Development in NSW for over 75 years. In recent years this organisation has transitioned to a subscription model.

There are 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations in New South Wales, each providing strategic direction for sustainable arts and cultural development in their region.

Their Boards include representatives from local government, tourism, education, arts councils and other community arts organisations and community members. In 2018 Arts North West moved to a skills based board. Each employs an Executive Director and other staff who coordinate a cultural development program across the contributing local government areas in their region.

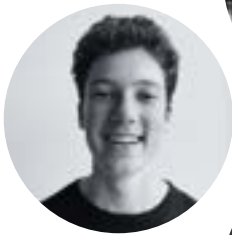


REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS IN NSW



ARTS MID NORTH COAST
ARTS NORTH WEST
ARTS NORTHERN RIVERS
ARTS OUTWEST
ARTS UPPER HUNTER
EASTERN RIVERINA ARTS
MURRAY ARTS
ORANA ARTS
OUTBACK ARTS
SOUTH COAST ARTS
SOUTH EAST ARTS
SOUTH WEST ARTS
SOUTHERN TABLELANDS ARTS
WEST DARLING ARTS
WESTERN RIVERINA ARTS

STATEWIDE PROJECTS



In 2024, 75 young creatives from across regional NSW took part in Horizons, a creative industry mentoring program that paired them with 14 experienced mentors. Managed by the Regional Futures NSW Regional Arts Network and funded by the Department of Regional NSW, the program provided participants with skills, industry connections, and real-world experience to help them pursue careers in the creative industries.

Throughout the year, participants worked closely with mentors, refining their craft, collaborating with peers, and exploring creative career pathways. The Horizons Digital Showcase is the result of this journey—a collection of incredible work from these emerging artists.

Featured Artists from Arts North West region:

- Tilda Morse (Dance & Musical Theatre)
- Jack Fuller (Music Producer) – Also known as JACKY BOY.
- Tommy Burnett (Writing & Publishing)
- Sophie Rogers (Theatre)
- Belle Meyer (Musical Theatre & Acting)
- Logan Hughes (Visual Arts digital)

Mentors from ANW region:

- Danny Stanley (Multidisciplinary Mentor)
- Isabelle Devos (Visual Arts Mentor)

The Horizons Digital Showcase:
horizons.regionalfutures.net.au/showcase-2024

CULTURAL TOURISM

In 2024 the Regional Arts Network (RAN) developed a research paper that looked at Cultural Tourism in regional NSW. The outcomes for the NENW were the need to assist our cultural tourism operators with marketing and promotions. Arts North West Events Calendar will continue to develop strategies to and act as a platform to assist with promotions as well as partner with the RAN Network to continue to build networks and partnerships between the tourism and arts sectors and provide training for artists and cultural organisations to enhance their tourism products and services.



OBJECTIVE 4: GOVERNANCE

*Provide sound and effective corporate governance
to ensure a sustainable organisation.*



**2025 - 2028
STRATEGIC PLAN**

ARTS NORTH WEST INC
16 EAST AVE GLEN INNES (02) 6732 4988
ABN 13 294 582 557

**Arts
north
west**

A new 3-4 year Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board at their December Meeting. The Plan responded to the input from Community Consultations conducted in Narrabri, Tamworth, Quirindi, Uralla, Gunnedah, Glen Innes, Tenterfield and Armidale in July and August.

GOVERNANCE

ARTS NORTH WEST BOARD

SKILLS BASED BOARD, 9 MEMBERS ELECTED BY MEMBERS

Arts North West is a Not-for-Profit arts service organisation with DGR status and is also a registered charity. For over 25 years, ANW has been a driving force in arts and cultural development across the region. Established as a Regional Arts Development Program in 1996 and later as an independent Regional Arts Board in 1997, Arts North West was founded with the core purpose of advancing regional arts development. Over the past quarter of a century, ANW has remained true to this mission, adapting its strategies and operations to meet the evolving needs of the community it serves.

In 2018 the organisation transitioned to a two-tier governance structure comprising a skill-based Board of Management governing the organisation and a Strategic Advisory Council (SAC) of representatives from contributing LGAs and independent cultural organisations providing strategic input and feedback into programming and direction.

The Board Directors have skills and/or expertise in the following areas:

- governance
- business and strategic planning
- financial management
- legal expertise in a non-profit organisation
- local government
- arts, arts practice, arts administration
- regional economic and/or tourism development
- regional community and cultural services development
- human resources management
- information technology communications
- risk management/insurance
- marketing/fundraising



Policy and procedures audits are updated and amended with endorsement by the Arts North West Board every two years. Many of these policies were changed to align with legislative changes to ensure the organisation remained compliant.

The Aboriginal Steering Committee provides insight and advice for culturally appropriate strategic decisions to promote a safe and inclusive service delivery through self-determination for our First Nations people. The establishment of the EnAble Arts Advisory Committee encourages people living with a disability to provide advice and guidance to ensure the creation and delivery of Arts North Wests programming is inclusive and accessible. First Nations representation, cultural diversity, ability diversity, gender equity and inclusion in board and committee composition encourages nominations that reflect the diversity of the New England North West area.

CONSULTATION

ARTS NORTH WEST STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ARTS NORTH WEST ABORIGINAL ARTS STEERING COMMITTEE

ARTS NORTH WEST ENABLE ARTS STEERING COMMITTEE

2024 BOARD MEMBERS



Arts North West, Vice Chair
Peter Ross



Arts North West, Public Officer
Sandy McNaughton



Arts North West, Treasurer
Thomas Robinson



Arts North West, Board Member
Rachel Parsons



Arts North West, Chair
Alistair Noble



Arts North West, Board Member
Tania Hartigan

AGM 24 May 2024 in
Glen Innes



Arts North West, Board Member
Viv Clyne

Board Meetings -
20 Feb, 24 May, 16
Sept, 18 Nov

2024 STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) MEMBERS **2024 SAC MEETINGS - 24 MAY, 18 NOV**

Sarah Reddington - Armidale Regional Council, Rachael Parsons - New England Regional Art Museum, Bridget Guthrie - Tamworth Regional Council, Brooke Southwell - Tamworth Regional Council, Scott Pollock - Narrabri Shire Council, Leanne Doran - Uralla Shire Council, Toni Averay - Uralla Shire Council, Susan Frater-Sims - Gunnedah Shire Council, Rebecca Ryan - Gunnedah Conservatorium of Music, Tiffany Galvin - Gwydir Shire Council, Nena Hicks - Walcha Council, Kelly James - Moree Plains Shire Council, Susannah Pearse - Moree Plains Shire Council, Lee Mathers - Tenterfield Shire Council, Kim Rhodes - Tenterfield Shire Council, Ruth Neave - Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Aimee Hutton - Armidale Regional Council, Carol Sparks - Glen Innes Severn Council, Rhonda Bombell - Glen Innes Severn Council, Ryan Brooke - Tamworth Regional Council, Adam Blakester - Uralla Shire Council



STAFF 2024

- **Executive Director** - Lauren Mackley
- **Communications/ Media and Engagement** - Emily Page/Penne Fraser
- **Administration Officer** - Leah Fontyn
- **Aboriginal Arts Officer** - Robbie Hartigan
- **Projects Officer** - Julia Warner
- **ANWOT Touring Coordinator** - Miranda Heckenberg/Hester Fraser
- **Finance Contractor** - Path Bookkeeping
- **IT Contractor** - Cloudwize Pty Ltd

The Executive Director, Lauren Mackley attended the Regional Arts NSW network meetings hosted by Regional Arts NSW, which are held three times a year. These meetings provide opportunities to engage with other RADOs from across the state and to meet with Federal and State departments and arts organisations. Once a year, all of the staff from all of the Regional Development Organisation's in New South Wales meet at the Regional Arts NSW Office for the annual meeting. In 2023, all staff from Arts North West attended this meeting and participated in the professional development offerings coordinated by Regional Arts NSW.

In 2024, Arts North West remained committed to delivering a program of excellence, collaboration, and innovation. The team worked with dedication to achieve these goals, and their continued efforts and collaborative spirit strengthened both the quality of our work and our connection to the communities we serve.

We extend our sincere thanks to the people of the New England North West for supporting and contributing to the success of our projects and programs throughout the year. Together, we've achieved meaningful outcomes and continued to grow the creative capacity of our region. As we look ahead to 2025, we acknowledge that our Executive Director will be taking maternity leave. Plans are in place to ensure a smooth transition and sustained momentum across our programs during this period. We look forward to another impactful year of creativity, connection, and collaboration.

CORE FUNDING

Arts North West is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and the contributions of 11 Local Government Authorities in the New England North West. Arts North West is thankful for this ongoing support for our organisation and the Arts in the New England North West.



Create NSW
Arts, Screen & Culture



ARMIDALE
Regional Council



PROJECT FUNDING

Arts North West projects are made possible by our partnerships and grant funds obtained by the below funding bodies and organisations.



Australian Government
Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support



FRRR
Foundation for Rural
Regional Renewal



Australian Government
Indigenous Languages and Arts

Available on the Arts North Website:



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF ARTS NORTH WEST INCORPORATED**



Printed By Arts North West 2025

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